



TALKING NEWS FEDERATION CIO

REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

PERIOD FROM 1 APRIL 2022 TO 31 MARCH 2023

Contents

	Page
Legal and administrative information	3
From the Chair	4
Our service	5
Our Impact	5
Independent Review	5
Governance and Management	6
Social Investment	6
Grant Making	6
Remuneration Policy for Trustees	6
Fundraising Statement	6
Public benefit	6
Conflicts of interest	7
Reserves Statement	7
Risk Management	7
Financial review	8
Talking News Federation Annual Accounts 2022 - 2023	9-12
Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of Talking News Federation	13

Talking News Federation CIO

Registered office and principal address	145 Victoria Road Swindon SN1 3BU	
Charity number	1185913	
President	Peter White MBE	
Vice President	Mike Wood	
Trustees	Amanda Reed (Chair) (elected 9 October 2021) Heather Bolton (Secretary until 16 February 2023) (elected 9 October 2021) Richard Black (Treasurer) (elected 9 October 2021) Alan Dunderdale (elected 9 October 2021, resigned 17 September 2022) Paul Ramsden (elected 9 October 2021) Tim Baty (elected 9 October 2021, resigned 18 December 2022) June Little (elected 17 September 2022)	
Independent Examiner	Gerald Bygraves GB Accounting Solutions Limited Millennium Studios Bedford Technology Park Bedford MK44 2YA	
Bankers	CAF Bank Limited 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ NatWest Bank Plc 30 High Street Chippenham SN15 3HB	Shawbrook Bank Limited Lutea House, Warley Hill Business Park The Drive, Great Warley Brentwood, Essex CM13 3BE
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From the Chairman

A year of change.

Following the Covid era, we have seen many changes in the Talking Newspaper world. As many Talking Newspapers are now back in the studios, up and running again producing their weekly editions, we are saddened by the loss of TNs who, following the pandemic, just lost too much - premises, volunteers or board members that their newspaper now ceases to exist.

We have been looking to improve contact with our members and partners and on this theme of "Getting TNs To Come Together", June our Engagement Trustee, took the lead with the concept of roadshows which due to their uptake by members and positive feedback we will continue into next year.

We have continued to recruit new Trustees with specialist skills to enhance the Board's skill set and knowledge base, including Secretary, IT Support, Marketing and Communications, and improving relationships with our Associated Partners. It is so good to have new Trustees coming onto the Board. I am looking forward to the new ideas, impact and improvements that they will make to the services we deliver to our members.

Following Conference, we will be reviewing our new strategic plan to ensure it is fit for the future with the theme of working together, supporting each other, communicating to share our knowledge and skills as our priority. Also, to strengthen the Talking Newspaper community to ensure that TNs not only survive but thrive.

Conference is always the time when we ask you to share with us your highs and lows, your problems and solutions, your wants and needs, your dreams and aspirations for the future of your TN.

We are here to help, so let's get talking!

Amanda Reed
Chairman

About the Talking News Federation

The Talking News Federation is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, run entirely by volunteers, with work overseen by a board of elected trustees. TNF's objectives are:

- to promote good practice and the efficiency and effectiveness of its member organisations for the benefit of blind or partially sighted people or those labouring under some temporary or permanent incapacity or disability that makes reading a strain
- to support, represent and develop the work of Talking News Organisations which undertake the systematic provision of news and other material by digital or analogue transmission throughout the United Kingdom
- to promote and assist the formation of Talking News Organisations throughout the United Kingdom.

Our service

The Talking News Federation exists to support and assist some 300 local Talking Newspapers throughout the United Kingdom to deliver local news and information in audio to blind, partially sighted and print disabled people.

Our impact

Local TNs and their listeners are at the heart of everything we do at the TNF. We endeavour to ensure the best quality service is delivered to our members.

The diagnosis of a print disability, such as macular degeneration, can be disempowering. Many sufferers speak of the condition as isolating and upsetting, similar to a bereavement. Many listeners regard the service provided by TNs as a way to counter loneliness and an opportunity to continue to keep in touch with local news and information. The TN service impact across the UK can be summarised as:

- 1,054 newspapers and magazines are recorded
- 25,000 listeners receive a regular local TN or magazine
- 10,000 volunteers deliver the service.

Independent Review

A TNF Independent Review is a friendly assessment of a TN's selected recording. The experienced review panel comprises the TNF review administrator, an audio technician, and two teams of four visually impaired listeners. TNF's aim in offering reviews is to act as a 'critical friend' to support TNs to provide consistently interesting and engaging local audio news to a growing number of listeners.

An Independent Review provides feedback on a TN's recording, as well as ideas and examples of great practice gained from reviewing other TNs. Working together in this way contributes to the achievement of TNF's aim.

No reviews were requested during the year under review.

Governance and Management

This Report covers the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

There are currently 5 TNF Trustees who meet at least quarterly to administer the charity. Every year one third of the Trustees is required to resign. However, Trustees may be nominated and elected for a subsequent term.

The Trustees are responsible for the process of succession planning to ensure that the Committee is always composed of members with the requisite experience and skills necessary to contribute to the life of the Charity and with the interests of Charity always in mind.

None of the Trustees has any beneficial interest in the Charity, nor receives any remuneration. The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity and are satisfied that systems are in place that offer reasonable mitigation of the major risks.

Trustee indemnity insurance is included in our insurance policies and has been in place throughout the year.

Social investment

All income received by the Charity is used solely for the benefit of members. The Trustees do not provide any social investment loans to individuals, charities or organisations.

Grant Making

No grants were awarded during the year.

Remuneration Policy for Trustees

The Charity's Trustees give of their time freely and none received remuneration in the year. Details of Trustees' expenses are in accordance with the TNF Allowances Policy on the TNF website.

Fundraising Statement

TNF does not currently conduct any proactive fundraising activity. We have never employed third party fundraisers nor engaged with commercial partners, bought or sold lists of personal data or mailing lists from any source.

Public Benefit

The Charities Act 2011 requires all charities to meet the legal requirement that its aims are for the public benefit. Two key principles should be met in order to demonstrate that an organisation's aims are for the public benefit: firstly, there must be an identifiable benefit and secondly that the benefit must be for the public or a section of the public.

The guidance issued by the Charity Commission includes "promoting the relief of those in need by reason of disability, financial or other hardship" and "the provision of leisure-time occupation in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving the conditions of life for the persons for whom they are intended".

The Trustees confirm they have given due consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and are confident that the Charity has complied with these. The Federation's charitable objects fall within subsection 3 (1) of the Charities Act 2011 relating to the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. The Trustees ensure these are carried out for the public benefit, through delivery of the Talking Newspaper service delivered by some 300 local Talking Newspapers for visually impaired and print disabled people within the United Kingdom.

Conflicts of Interest

As part of our governance process, Trustees are required to confirm annually whether they or any close member of their family has any business interests in any organisation or company which may result in a conflict of interest. Several trustees are associated with Member TNs.

Reserves Statement

The Annual Conference, which includes the Annual General Meeting, is TNF's major financial commitment. The maximum liability could be up to £25,000. To meet this potential liability, a designated fund of £10,000 is held alongside a similar level fund relating to the development/rescue of Talking Newspapers in the UK.

The Trustees consider a level of unrestricted reserves amounting to 50% of annual expenditure is realistic. The reserves held at the end of the Financial Year are significantly above the level needed by TNF due to the receipt of unbudgeted donations. Going forward, projects are being developed to ensure member TNs, and the VI Listeners they serve, will benefit.

Risk Management

The Trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces
- the establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate or remove those risks identified in the annual review; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise

Major risks are:

- a loss of confidence in the Federation resulting in a reduction in membership.
- the continued closure of local and regional print newspapers, bringing additional challenges to those providing local TN services.
- the closure of local TNs as a result of either/or the demise of the print newspaper or the difficulties of recruiting volunteers and leaders.

The risk is managed by maintaining close links with TNs, the provision of a Federation website to attract listeners and volunteers and contributing to the TN Talk chat forum where questions on technical, governance, copyright and related subjects may be posted and advice sought. TNF trustees and other volunteers organise training and support events and represent TNF and the whole TN constituency at events organised by other VI groups working with similar beneficiaries.

Financial Review

The accounts for the year under report – 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 – have been Independently Examined.

Our sustaining source of income is Membership Subscriptions from local Talking Newspaper organisations in the UK. This year, 7% fewer TNs renewed their membership than for the previous year. This reflects closure/mergers of TNs, but also the National Lockdown around Covid-19 disrupted administrative and financial procedures for TNs and some volunteers have decided to step down, many after several years of supporting their visually impaired neighbours. This has created a management issue for some TNs which have decided to close even though they are financially stable and have a viable number of VI Listeners. TNF has developed services to support TNs in this position and we are confident that the trend can be reversed.

A major source of income this year was from the closure of member Talking Newspapers with over sixty thousand pounds gifted to the Federation. Whilst the funds are very welcome for TNF going forward, it is deeply regrettable that member TNs are closing and VIP Listeners are losing highly valued services.

Other income was a donation from a TN to sponsor the inaugural TNF Road Show held in Cheltenham. This was the first local event held for several years and followed cancellation of two such events in 2021 due to a lack of delegates.

Total Income for the Year was £87,239, including Delegate Booking Fees.

Trustees continued their practice of alternating meetings between physical and virtual gatherings. Expenditure supporting TNs almost doubled as activity increased and new services were developed. TNF Soundings is now fully established and Talk Info is undergoing rigorous location testing. TNF promotional materials were redesigned and distributed geographically to facilitate attendance at events nationwide. Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind continued to deliver administrative support both to TNF and to TN members during the period.

The AGM and National Conference was held at the Musical Museum in Brentford, West London. Although this provided a first-class Conference venue it has no overnight accommodation and delegates undertook bookings directly with local hotels where required. Once again, the event was available to TNs on-line through the excellent audio-visual equipment and production team at the museum.

Overall, TNF registered a surplus of £54,800 after deducting the deficit of £3,744 recorded by the Conference Events

No awards were made under the TNF Member's Grant scheme.

Talking News Federation Accounts 2022-2023

The period covered is from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 (excluding Conferences)

1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

2022
£

2021
£

Receipts

Membership

Membership Subscriptions for the year 2021 - 2022		10,119.00
Membership Subscriptions for the year 2022 - 2023	9,594.00	1,815.00
Membership Subscriptions for the year 2023 - 2024	4,686.00	

Donations

Donations - General	63,799.87	16,652.86
Donations - Restricted	0.00	0.00

Other Income

Service Income	0.00	516.00
Bank Interest	549.05	303.40

Total Receipts

78,628.92 29,406.26

Payments

Administration

Office Administration Costs	4,069.47	2,167.06
TNF Insurance	1,451.46	1,401.32
Finance Charges	72.00	96.00
Trustees Meetings	3,983.67	1,702.10
Archiving	149.15	346.20
Outsource Costs	1,524.49	1,500.00
	11,250.24	7,212.68

Services

Direct TN Support	2,494.52	2,400.00
Exhibiting at Events	1,201.84	414.00
TNF Soundings	1,000.68	27.74
TNF TalkInfo	276.04	10.79
TNF Website and Social Media	1,220.52	1,552.94
Promotional Material	2,521.70	0.00
TN Development and Training	18.00	535.10
	8,733.30	4,940.57

Governance

Independent Examination 2021-22	100.05	96.80
	100.05	96.80

Total Payments

20,083.59 12,250.05

Surplus for the year

58,545.33 17,156.21

National and Regional Conferences

Brentford AGM & Conference September 2022

Cheltenham Road Show March 2023

Cardiff AGM & Conference October 2021

Accounting Period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

	2022/3	2021
	£	£
Receipts		
Delegate Fees	£5,518.00	£11,930.00
Exhibition Stands	£93.00	£310.00
Sponsorship	£3,000.00	
Raffle		£108.00
Total Receipts	£8,611.00	£12,348.00
Payments		
Venue and Accommodation	£9,835.22	£13,605.70
Speakers/Gratuities	£768.44	£299.00
Stationery/ Telephone/ Postage/ Travel	£877.15	£295.05
Audiovisual Systems	£600.00	£0.00
Planning & Oversight	£275.08	£435.00
Total Payments	£12,355.89	£14,634.75
(Deficit) on Conferences for the year	<u>(3,744.89)</u>	<u>(2,286.75)</u>
Brentford Event	<u>(2,240.97)</u>	
Cheltenham Event	<u>(1,503.92)</u>	
Cardiff Event		<u>(2,286.75)</u>

Talking News Federation

Summary of Financial Results

1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

		2022 - 2023			2021-2022
		£	£	£	£
		General Fund	Designated Fund	Restricted Fund	Total Funds
Total incoming resources					
	Membership Activities	78,628.92			78,628.92
	National/Regional Conferences	5,611.00		3,000.00	8,611.00
		84,239.92	0.00	3,000.00	87,239.92
Total Resources expended					
	Membership Activities	18,788.87			18,788.87
	National/Regional Conferences	9,355.89		3,000.00	12,355.89
	TNF Soundings; TalkInfo; Training			1,294.72	1,294.72
		28,144.76	0.00	4,294.72	32,439.48
Net incoming/outgoing resources		56,095.16	0.00	(1,294.72)	54,800.44
Fund Balances B/fwd. 1st April 2022		43,483.69	26,984.36	23,188.94	93,656.99
Fund Balances C/fwd. 31 March 2023		99,578.85	26,984.36	21894.22	148,457.43

Summary Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2023

			2023 £	2022 £
Funds				
Unrestricted funds			99,578.85	43,483.69
Designated Funds		Note 1	26,984.36	26,984.36
Restricted	Ronald Sturt Fund		9,462.40	10,757.12
Restricted	TNF Development Fund	Note 2	12,431.82	12,431.82
Accumulated Funds			99,578.85	93,656.99

Represented by:**Cash at Bank**

CAF Bank Cash
 CAF Bank Gold
 NatWest Bank
 Shawbrook Bank 60 Days' Notice

	2023 £	2022 £
	9,607.48	2,457.95
	5,082.92	29,003.89
	9,651.79	10,545.27
	124,115.24	51,649.88
	<u>148,457.43</u>	<u>93,656.99</u>

Note 1**Designated Funds**

- a) £10,000 to underwrite the National Conference as large deposits are now demanded by the venues.
 b) £10,000 to support our TN development / rescue role.
 c) £6,984.36 to support Talking Info.

Note 2**Restricted Funds**

The Trustees have clarified the potential uses of the Ronald Sturt Fund with the Donors and it will be used to support the establishment of TNF Soundings and Training delivered to member TNs.
 The TNF Development Fund has been created from donations by the Sussex Coast Talking News and Wigan Metro Talking News to fund the creation/rebuilding of TNs in areas where there is a need but where there is no local TN.

Trustee

Date

Trustee

Date



5 September 2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF TALKING NEWS FEDERATION

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are set out on pages nine to twelve.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act
- have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Gerald Bygrave FMAAT per;

GB Accounting Solutions Limited
Millennium Studios
Bedford Technology Park
Thurleigh
Bedford
Bedfordshire
MK44 2YA

Date: 5th September 2023